

CONSERVATION COALITION OF CONNECTICUT

January 26th, 2023

Dear Honored Members of the Environmental Committee:

Please support HB 6484 An Act Concerning Certain Harvesting of Horseshoe Crabs

The time to act is overdue. The excellent stewardship of this committee can help save the fate of horseshoe crabs on our signature beaches. Please support this bill.

1. Having existed for at least 445 million years, we are facing the fact that horseshoe crabs are **functionally extinct in Long Island Sound**. Their numbers are so few that they no longer have any significant function within our marine ecosystem.
2. Our shore bird populations depend on some of their eggs for food. As you know, our bird populations in CT have been in decline, and food stock is part of the equation.
3. The current permit system is not working, nor can permit violations be monitored in reality. When we see fisherman scoop up horseshoe crabs do we know if he has is following his permit requirements? A complete ban on hand harvesting can at least allow for observational adherence.
4. Fisherman harvest horseshoe crabs for cheap chum and bait. In CT they do not harvest for medical purposes and toxin tests.

Without your help, we will needlessly see the end of this valued member of our sound eco system **DISAPPEAR IN OUR LIFE TIME**.

Please endorse this bill and support it through to passage with your greatest urgency.

Thank you for your valuable stewardship in protection of Connecticut's natural resources.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Dempsey
Founder, Conservation Coalition Connecticut